

592 The Batutsi women each occupy her own ruho with her chil-
595 dren, women servants (abaja), and cattle given by the husband. The
concubines live one or two together in separate huts inside the ruho of
a legitimate wife.

Occasionally, the Bahutu wives occupy the same hut, but only
for a rather short time.

574 The wife is not required to return occasionally to her parents.
787 However, the auguries may decide that childbirth will be more suc-
cessful in her own family. [27]

7. Rights and Obligations of Husband and Wife

● 593 According to custom, the husband has the general duty of aid-
ing and assisting his wife (kukamira umugore, lit., to milk [a cow]
for his wife). He must provide her with clothing and ornaments (1),

[30]

1. In the past the husband spent a great
deal to provide his wife with ububutega
(rings made of grasses) which she wore by
the hundred on her legs. This finery
which weighed down the Banyarwanda
woman's figure and interfered with walk-
ing was considered the height of elegance,
for it gave her the gait of cows that are
universally admired in Ruanda.

[48]

and nurse her when she is sick. In the same way, a wife who
abandoned her husband when he was ill or in trouble would be dis-
graced.

593 Separation of property exists between husband and wife. The
421 wife owns her ruho, her field, and in addition, among the Batutsi,
563 some inyarulembo cattle (2) and some abagaragu that she received

2. Cf. Property, Ownership of Cattle,
p. 44.

from her husband.

462 Among the Bahutu the man assumes the heavy work, construction of the rugo, and clearing of the land; the wife, helped by her husband and those children who are old enough, cultivates the fields. Domestic work is also shared: carrying water and wood, milking the cows, and making the beer are the husband's jobs, while the wife cooks, makes the butter, and keeps the rugo and kraal clean.

593
842 In a way marriage emancipates the munyarwanda woman, but only motherhood gives her the rights which make her a privileged person as compared to her sisters of Black Africa. The more children a woman has, the greater the esteem in which she is held (3).

[163]

3. Families with six, seven, eight, and even ten children are numerous in Ruanda; this prolificacy accounts for the fact that the country's population doubles in about twenty-five years.

593
562 The Mututsi wife is truly the nyirarugo (mistress of the house), the nyirabuja (boss). Her husband consults her [28] in matters of interest, asks her advice on the subject of the children's marriages, etc. In addition, among the Batutsi, she directs the servants, supervises the work of the hill people who come to do the customary labor and also the work of the abagaragu. She cannot, however, dismiss a client or make any important decision without the consent of her husband. If she did so and the husband did not interfere, he would be the laughingstock of the neighborhood and he would be called inganzwa (man without character who is dominated by his wife).

The Banyarwanda have an expression to describe a good wife. They say that she "builds for her husband" (kubakira umugabo).

A Muhutu never fails to make use, on the slightest pretext, of his right of marital castigation. A Mututsi, on the contrary, cannot strike his wife without falling from esteem except for a very serious reason.

837 The duty of fidelity exists for both husband and wife. But custom is very tolerant of infractions of conjugal fidelity committed by the man, at least if he belongs to the same social class as the deceived husband.

837
586 The husband's adultery obviously displeases the wife but she nearly always will accept it. However, she sometimes leaves her

348 girl, the girl's father takes over the child.
251

[37] In the past, during the wars, the owner of a woman slave sometimes married her. The children of this marriage were considered legitimate and [37] had their fathers' status, even if he already had children from marriage with a munyarwanda wife.

Children born of the master and a woman slave were also considered legitimate.

CHAPTER V. PATERNAL AUTHORITY

593 The patria potestas is exercised by the father. In the past it implied the right of life and death over his children. Today the father does not have such power, but his authority still remains sovereign and extends even over married sons. The latter must in particular, give him cows if he asks for any to increase his herds and to replace animals that are sick or have died.

A bad son can be cursed by his father and driven out of the family and even from the hill (igitshibwa or ikivume, the accursed one). He goes off with empty hands, and his brothers divide his property.

As a counterpart to his authority, the father is obligated to support his children and to establish his sons by paying the dowry.

The children must obey their mother as well as their father.

[604] Similarly they must be deferential to their paternal uncles and aunts, and to a lesser degree, to their maternal uncles and aunts. Sisters must obey their brothers, and younger brothers, their older ones.

603 The loss of paternal authority does not exist as such. If the
604 father is unworthy or incapable, the grandfather or paternal uncle has charge of the children. [38]

CHAPTER VI. TUTELAGE AND EMANCIPATION (1)

1. Cf. also, Inheritance, Guardianship of Children, p. 60.

429 When the father is dead, usually one of his brothers watches over the widow and orphans. In the absence of a paternal uncle, guardianship goes to a maternal uncle.

604
429 The paternal uncle may marry his sister-in-law. He has the same rights over his nephews and the same obligations to them as their father. If the widow marries a stranger (umwinjila), the latter becomes the guardian of the children, but as a rule he has not much authority. And if he does not fulfill his obligations, he may be driven out by the paternal uncle and has to go away empty-handed.

Similarly, if the uncle who is guardian does not fulfill his obligations, the children may complain to their father's patron, or, if they have no cattle, to the hill chief. When they have grown up, they may even drive out the unworthy guardian.

Only through marriage do the sons gain independence unless previously they have freed themselves with violence from the guardian's authority.

● 593 Nevertheless, even when they are emancipated by marriage, male children are not freed of their obligations to their parents (1).

1. Cf. also, Inheritance, Guardianship of Children, p.60.

[39] CHAPTER VII. MAJORITY AND INTERDICTION

[881]
885 In Ruanda there is no initiation ceremony to mark the entrance of boys into social life any more than there are age classes. But when a young man has become ingaragu, his father then looks upon him as a man; he speaks to him of cattle and crops, allows him to share his meal, and sends him in his place to the patron to pay homage, etc.

732 Lunatics (abasazi), the dumb (ibirazi) and the deaf (ibipfamatwi) move around freely and, except for the first, may marry.

593 The property of a spendthrift (ikarara, lit., half mad, exalted) is managed by his parents.

As for the bad son who is disobedient and insolent, he can be cursed by his father (igitshibwa or ikivume).

561 CHAPTER VIII. TABLE INDICATING THE NAMES USED TO DESIGNATE THE DIFFERENT AGES OF LIFE (1)

1. The age given in years is obviously

768 children with her. The grown children stay with the husband's
736 family and provide for their widowed mother. However, child-
less widows earn their subsistence by working for neighbors or
by begging.

562 The position of women is higher and the esteem in which
593 they are held is greater than among most other East African
Negroes. As far as domestic and family matters are concerned,
the wife's position is approximately equal to that of the hus-
band. Both of them share the daily chores, except tending the

[462] cattle which is solely the husband's affair, and work in the
fields and in the garden where most of the work is allotted to
the wife, although the husband will lend his assistance with
all these tasks. The preparation of meals is also solely the
wife's job. In addition to this, the wife takes care of the
children and the hut. The social equality of the two sexes is
also demonstrated by the custom -- which cannot be found
among any other East African people -- that husband and wife
[264] eat together (see p. 26). Emin Pascha expressly reports of the
northern Bahima that the wives eat together with their hus-
bands, a practice which is not followed by the Bantu who live
there (Petermanns Mitteilungen [Petermann's Communications],
1879, p. 222). The advice of the wife and particularly the
mother is sought in all important affairs in Urundi. Their
opinion is often decisive. Female chiefs are more of an ex-

562 ception here than among the eastern tribes, the Wassumbwa and
the Wanjamwesi, but they do occur as a result of succession by
inheritance, and they are not so conspicuous publicly as among
the Wanjamwesi. The greatest amount of influence is wielded
[644] by the king's mother. She has the role of co-ruler during her
entire lifetime (see p. 185 [not translated]), a position of re-
spect which has also been preserved in the other Bahima states
as far as Ufipa, the southernmost of them (No. 47, p. 90).

Of all the Barundi wives, those of the Batussi are the
proudest. In contrast, the Batwa wives are over-burdened with
work, are held in low esteem, and have no voice in the family
council.

595 The large majority of the Barundi is monogamous. They
are not prosperous enough to be able to purchase more than one
wife or to support more than one household. Anyone who can

784

There are special rules dealing with the consumption of water. The washing and drinking water in a house must never be completely used up. Every evening a little water is left in [782] a jug so that the manes can refresh themselves at night. This is called amasi y'Imana. The family will use this remaining water the next morning for washing themselves (No. 19, p. 6).

[788] A person may not cross a river without first painting a line on his forehead with the mud from the shore.

Numerous rules affect family life. A father never enters [606] the hut of his daughter-in-law. Also, until his married [593] daughters have given birth to a child, the father may not see them unveiled (No. 19, p. 6). A woman who has just given [846] birth to a child cannot leave the house for three days, since otherwise the baby, but not the mother, would get sick. If [845] twins are born, a religious ceremony has to be performed (see p. 110), since otherwise the children would die. A son-in-law [606] must avoid his mother-in-law; a daughter-in-law must avoid her father-in-law. If the young people nevertheless meet them, they must run or at least turn away from their parents-in-law. This is considered a sign of great respect. Its non-observance would be a serious insult and would lead to breaking the engagement [sic]. Basically, however, the reason for this is probably the fear of the taboo against contact with close relatives which is connected with conceptions of exogamy. A violation of this taboo is believed to bring harm and impurity upon the violator. This taboo is strictly observed by many peoples [171] of East Africa, for example, by the Wangoni, Wagogo, Massai, Wakamba, Basoga, Baganda, and others. (No. 30, Vol. II, pp. 400, 403, 412, 420, 461, 508). In Urundi the young couple is bound by the rule to avoid their parents-in-law until they have children, but after that the young people must show the greatest attention and subservience to the wishes of their parents-in-law. It often happens that the demands made by the latter are so exacting that the young couple has hardly enough time left for taking care of their own housework and the fields (No. 23, 1914, p. 122).

482

784

The pad used for carrying burdens on the head (ingata) has to be treated with particular care. No one may sit on it for

423 are least fortunate or most enterprising get together to sell or exchange
[31] their plots and go to the edge of the forest to buy a piece of land or
to develop the one they owned there.

From then on, the clan to which they belong includes an additional village.

As in Europe the sale and lease of fields and banana groves is made in the presence of witnesses. Land boundaries are marked with stones and other conventional signs.

A felled tree, a displaced stone, some ground which has been broken in a neighbor's field over the dividing line, such things cause frequent litigations that give rise to disunity within families and among tribes over long periods of time.

361 The Munyarwanda /sing. of Banyarwanda/ remains attached to his native village, to his plot of land. He does not feel the need to move elsewhere, to change his domicile, as do the Blacks settled east and west of Tanganyika.

[134] Ruanda soil is richer by far and sustains numerous and varied crops.

245 In addition to the banana grove, which is the most important part of his property, the Munyarwanda has begun to plant trees and to cultivate coffee, which brings in large profits to which he was not accustomed. Ownership of a small herd of cattle or sheep makes his
[23] home even dearer to him.

● 593 It may be said that his home life is more stable than in neighboring areas, and that he leaves it only rarely (1).

[166]

1. The Blacks, too, are familiar with nostalgia and home sickness.

The fear of a vendetta or the attraction of large salaries may temporarily induce the natives to expatriate themselves. Sooner or later, however, they return to the cradle of their ancestors.

The Banyarwanda cite characteristic instances of this.

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543

The line of behavior followed by the Banyarwanda when it is time to make a will shows that their social organization, /49/ though far from perfect, is superior to that of many other Negro tribes.

Hamites, Bahutu, and Batwa are anxious to express their last wishes clearly in order to leave nothing unforeseen and in order to keep chicanery from creeping in among the heirs.

While alive the father gathers his children around him on a day he selects, or, if he wishes to lend more solemnity to the occasion, he goes with them to the hill chief and offers him a beer as an introductory gift. Among his male children, he appoints the one he likes best as his principal legatee, whether it be the oldest, the youngest, or any one among them.

The chosen son will succeed him in his role as head of the family to levy taxes on his brothers in the name of the king or of the Hamitic chief, and will deal with the latter in matters concerning the small group.

[578]

A father may disinherit and curse a son who has given him serious grounds for complaint, who has not shown him due respect, who has insulted him, abandoned him in times of misfortune, or defected during legal proceedings. "May he bear no more children," he exclaims, spitting into one hand and then into the other. "You have behaved badly toward me. I cut you off from my family, I

[539]

curse you." (1)

1. Ntabyare! Ntaheke! Wambereye
gito, nanje ndaguchiye mu bana banje!

As we have already said, the family property is divided into as many lots as there are boys.

The same holds true for the livestock, cows, goats, and sheep. Each son receives an equal share.

The executor of the will, as the eldest son or head of the family, adds a small field or a piece of a banana grove to his patrimonial share.

While his father is still alive, he usually receives a cow, called "obedience cow" (inka y'indabukirano) to confirm his authority

- 428 over his brothers. As an act of vassalage, the latter must in turn /each/
 ● 593 give him a beer, a hoe, and a sheep. /50/ They acknowledge his superiority thereby, and place themselves under his dependence. In return he must show interest in them and in their legal proceedings, take care of their affairs in the event of illness, defend them against one and all.

[429] Daughters have no right whatever to inherit from their father. Before he dies, on the other hand, the father appoints one of his sons to look after each one of them to take care of her future, her marriage, and to watch over her until she marries.

851 A daughter whose bride price was paid for in cows receives
 431 a heifer from her father or brother when she comes to show them her first born. Among wealthy families, she is given a cow at the birth of each male child. Among poorer families, the gift consists of a
 [556] young bull, a goat, or one or two hoes, depending on the amount of the bride price (1).

1. A cow given under these circumstances is called "young mother's cow" (ichari, umwari). The young bull obtained under the same circumstances is called "woman's garment" (inkanda), because the animal's hide must theoretically be used to clothe the happy mother.

According to the Banyarwanda custom governing the occasion, the child's father must give three jugs of beer and a basketful of cooked food to his father-in-law or to the brother-in-law who is his wife's guardian.

428 Upon their father's death, daughters merely receive garments made of cowhide, hoes, or sheep, which on account of the bereavement are called by the name of "salary or reward for tears."

784

A crowned crane that perches at the top of a hut, or a dog, goat, or sheep that manages to climb upon it, are sure signs of approaching misfortunes.

It is rigorously forbidden to kill a crowned crane, crow, wagtail, lizard, frog, or toad.

The parents of a newly married man may not partake of his meals unless they first cook a bunch of bananas in his house. Scurvy is the punishment for this transgression.

[24] A woman who has just given birth to a child must see to it that the umbilical cord of the newborn is not lost. If there is food in the hut at the moment of childbirth, the mother may not touch it. If she broke this taboo she would contract a disease (guhuma).

The father of a baby whose teeth have not yet come out may not take a new wife without exposing the child to the danger of contracting the acute scurvy disease (amahuma).

[593] If a child wishes to sit in a chair just vacated by his father, he must first place there a little straw. If he were to act otherwise, he would risk his father's curse.

Children are not permitted to lean against the post which is reserved for the family head. This, too, is done for reasons of propriety.

The owner of a calf whose hooves have only one toe as the result of a congenital deformity may not butcher it except at his own home. The meat of the animal may not be eaten elsewhere. It must be eaten on the spot with the sorghum bread brought by each guest. At the end of the meal, the guests wash their hands in the courtyard and not outside of it.

A goat that sits... on its behind must be butchered /414/ or sold immediately, so that evil will not befall the occupants of the hut.

A hunter of "feli-cervaline /?/" (tiger cats) must be careful careful not to make too many victims among those carnivores so as not to risk unfortunate consequences. A peasant threshing beans in the pod must see to it that no one steps on the threshing floor while he is working.

He would experience the surprise of seeing his provision of beans diminish if a passer-by were to stop suddenly before him.

841 adornment at the proper time (first menstrual period after marriage), one of the partners will die young. After her head has been shaved the wife receives gifts from her husband.

585 When the woman has put on her cowhide, she pays her parents a visit. It sometimes happens that if the menstrual period is early this visit precedes the gift of the first hoe. On the way to her parents she has her head wrapped in the skin and is wearing her best jewelry. At her parents' house she grinds flour and fills a basket, piling it high. She removes as much as is piled over the edge of the basket and takes this to her husband. It is cooked to a stiff mush, and husband and wife eat it together. This ceremony is also supposed to guarantee numerous descendants.

593 Children are prominent in the family. The parents love them tenderly and treat them well. Although the intimate relationship between mother and child excludes the father somewhat, nevertheless the husband and wife show a certain attachment and tenderness toward one another. This is said to be true particularly of the Batutsi.

In Mulera, when a man goes on a journey, his wife pours off a little beer from each jug used and puts it aside. If the man returns and finds no beer, he concludes that his wife has not thought of him and has been unfaithful to him.

586 In Nduga, as we have mentioned before, marriages are of only moderate duration.

585 The Mulera wedding has been beautifully and completely described by Father Felix Dufays (1), and the marriage customs in

- [113]
1. Dufays, Father F., "Lied und Gesang bei Brautwerbung und Hochzeit in Mulera-Ruanda [Song and Singing during Courtship and Marriage in Mulera-Ruanda], " Anthropos, 1909, pp. 847-878.

other parts of Ruanda were discussed by Father P. Schumacher.(2)

2. Schumacher, Father P., "Die Ehe in Ruanda [Marriage in Ruanda], " Anthropos, 1910, pp. 870-906.

601 Role	Term of address	Term of reference
VIII. The generation of Ego's great grandchildren		
SoSoSo	Mwana	Muzukuruza
SoSoDa	Mwana	Muzukuruza
IX. The other generations under		
Descendant		Ubuwivi ¹¹

Let us now turn to the description of the most important of these roles.

593 During all his father's lifetime, Ego remained subject to his authority, though before puberty the young son was allowed to show some familiarity in his relations with his father. Even at that early age, however, the interests and comfort of his father predominated, and it seems that the weakness of a child was not considered a reason for giving him relatively more food and other [881] comforts than his father. When he reached puberty and was initiated into the Ryangombe sect, he was treated more severely [882] and had to behave as an obedient servant of his father. He could not go to sleep before his father, or get up after him in the morning, without permission. He had to stay near the gate of the fence, to close it at night and open it in the morning, instead of sitting near the fire. This was especially true among the Hutu who did not [883] have servants. There the son had to tend the cattle (goats, sheep, and eventually cows) with the help of his sisters. His training in 593 different men's activities was given to him by his father. Among the [868] Tutsi, where such training included dancing, composition of poetry, and the use of weapons, different specialists were required. The training was given at the court of a chief or of the king. But even when separated from his father for a long time, the young Tutsi was expected to manifest the same attitude of obedience. 593 When his son was getting married, the father, Hutu as well as [583] Tutsi, had to help him to pay the bride-wealth. Marriage did not change the son's attitude towards his father, who still had the right to inflict severe punishments if disobeyed. He could curse him, [681] which amounted to complete ostracism and being obliged to flee to a region where he was not known and consequently where it was extremely difficult for him to make a living. The father could carry out less severe but more humiliating punishments, such as beating [606] his son with a stick or preventing him from sleeping with his wife for some time by monopolizing her; (it should be noted that

¹¹ Compare with Vanhove, 1941, pp. 11-16.

THE SYSTEM OF KINSHIP AND AFFINITY

43

the absence of a taboo on sex-relations between father-in-law and daughter-in-law may have induced some severe fathers to punish their sons in this way). As long as their fathers lived, sons were never emancipated.¹³

The father had a slightly different attitude towards his daughter, though she certainly had to obey and respect him. Like the boys the girls went to sleep later than their parents and got up earlier. They participated in a large measure in the domestic chores, among the Hutu. They were more closely associated with their mother, the father did not have the task of punishing them, and they were never beaten by him after puberty. They were said usually to have great influence on their father and could get what they wanted from him. When they married the father received the bride-wealth, but he had to supply some of the counter-gifts. Marriage did not cut the links between the girl and her inzu which remained her inzu. But her close connexion with her husband's inzu sometimes divided her loyalties, though I was told that this was rare and anyway not a part of her expected behaviour. *Amahitamo yaje, umwana ni uwa se* (when a choice has to be made, one is the child of one's father).

Ego regarded his paternal uncle very much as another father. He referred to him as 'our father'. Like the father, the father's brother had the right to punish. This is why a man who had committed some offence did not dare to take refuge with his paternal uncle. Their relations were, however, more cordial and less tense: the paternal uncle was the usual intermediary between Ego and Fa when the former wanted to obtain something from the latter. Ego, for instance, told his FaBr first when he wished to marry. There was no significant difference of behaviour towards the father's brothers, unless the relative ages of Ego and his FaBr were exceptional. If the nephew and his uncle were about the same age, there was a more familiar relationship between them. If FaBr was about as old as Fa, the attitude was more polite and respectful.

The paternal aunt (FaSi) had perhaps a still more prominent position. As she had received no part of her father's heritage, she felt free to ask from her father or from her brothers whatever she wanted for her nephews (Ego's children). Moreover, as her nephews could marry her daughters without any very urgent

¹³ Cf. Vincent, 1954, pp. 106-14.

44 THE PREMISE OF INEQUALITY IN RUANDA

604 obligation to pay the bride-wealth, she could exert further
 582 pressure on her brothers by not agreeing to the marriage; finally,
 584 she had the power to curse her nephews and nieces. All this accounted for the importance of her role in the inzu. Nieces and nephews very often turned to her and she was often said to love them more than her own children. This difference between FaBr's and FaSi's attitudes toward Ego is perhaps reflected in the terminology. FaBr referred to his nephew by the word *muhunguwacu* (our-boy) and to his niece by *mukobwawacu* (our-girl), whereas the FaSi referred to both of them by *musengenewanjye* (my niece/nephew). This last word contains the possessive 'my' used in kinship terminology usually for only the primary relatives, whereas the term of reference used by the FaBr includes the form 'our' usually used for secondary or more distant relatives.

602 Between Ego and the members of the generations alternate to his own, there were symmetrical relations of great familiarity and joking, with a preponderant sexual theme. The grandfather
 603 called his granddaughters his little wives and his grandsons his love rivals. The reason given for this familiarity is that it helped to
 867 cheer up the old people and to train the young ones in socially enjoyable talk. Grandfathers also participated in the socialization
 887 of the grandchildren by transmitting proverbs, legends, tales of
 869 past history, and mythological conceptions in which a great deal of the Ruanda view of the world was embodied.

• 593 As regards siblings, Ego was expected to have a respectful attitude towards his eldest brother, *uwamboneye izuba* (the first who saw the sun) even if the latter happened not to inherit the paternal authority over his brothers. In these cases he was honoured more than his brother who wielded the paternal authority. The eldest brother's advice was always asked by his siblings. Other brothers were expected to assume what we would call fraternal attitudes. But as brothers competed for their father's favour and had to share his heritage, there was under this appearance of cordiality a very deep rivalry and mutual distrust. It should be noted that all that is said of siblings applied both to half paternal siblings and to full siblings. In a descent group founded on agnatic principles the distinction of full and half paternal siblings is largely irrelevant.

Sisters were also expected to respect and obey their oldest brother. After they had reached puberty, however, he could not enforce obedience. The oldest sister's role was somewhat similar

THE SYSTEM OF KINSHIP AND AFFINITY

45

to the oldest brother's as regards her younger sisters. But the importance of seniority was less stressed among sisters than among brothers. There was often rivalry between married sisters as there was no taboo on intercourse between a woman and her sister's husband. [609] [835] 573

Sisters and brothers were playmates during their childhood. After puberty their relations were restricted, but certainly not to the point of avoidance. As girls did not inherit from the father, as they were the prospective paternal aunts of the future children of their brothers, the relations between siblings of opposite sexes did not manifest the same covert strain as that between brothers. [428]

Parallel paternal male cousins of Ego were assimilated to his brothers, but as there was no inheritance rivalry, and as Ego was not required to manifest a particular respect for his eldest cousin, Ego's actual relation with his parallel cousins was in fact more fraternal than with his brothers. Ego considered the daughters of his paternal uncle as sisters with whom there was a marriage prohibition. There was consequently a certain reserve between them which, however, did not prevent them from exchanging obscene jokes at a celebration or a gathering, but any sexual acts were severely tabooed. [589] [835] 605

(d) *Organization and activities of the umulyango and the ubwoko*

The two other descent groups may be described much more briefly. The secondary patrilineage when it had just divided from the primary group continued to share in the previous functions of the formerly united inzu. There were still gatherings of the descendants of the umulyango's ancestor, mutual aid, judgements in disputes, and participation in the blood-feuds. But gradually these activities were confined more and more within the new inzu and after an intermediate period, the umulyango generally disappeared as a corporate group.¹³ Obviously if the splitting was due to a change of residence or a dispute, the functions of the former inzu were very quickly assumed by the new one and relations with other branches of the former inzu (which then constituted an umulyango) were not very close. 613 571

Did the umulyango as such have any special characteristics or activities? All our informants agree on the rule of exogamy. 613

¹³ For a definition of a corporate group see Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, 1950, p. 41.

48 THE PREMISE OF INEQUALITY IN RUANDA

Role	Term of address	Term of reference
601 IV. Ego's generation		
MoBrSo	Name, nickname or Muvandimwe	Mubyarawanjye (one with whom to beget-mine)
MoBrDa	Name, nickname or Muvandimwe	Mubyarawanjye
MoFaBrSoSo	Name, nickname or Mwana	Mubyarawacu (one with whom to beget-our)
MoFaBrSoDa	Name, nickname or Mwana	Mubyarawacu
MoFaFaBrSoSoSo	Mwana	Mubyarawacu
MoFaFaBrSoSoDa	Mwana	Mubyarawacu ¹⁸

- 593 Ego's mother, who was the link between Ego and her descent group, was not a figure of authority to the same extent as Ego's father. Her children had to behave respectfully and obediently towards her, but as she was a wife of their father, they saw that she, like they themselves, had to submit to an authority in the home. Moreover, Ruanda placed a very high value on their children and they were more important for the father than his wife. Consequently the children knew that from their father's point of view their mother did not enjoy a status superior to their own. Consequently the mother-son and mother-daughter relations were usually free and affectionate. Very often the mother, when widowed and old, came and lived with one of her children, whereas the old
- [589] widower frequently lived alone.

- 604 The relationship between Ego and his maternal uncle was one of extreme restraint. It was not avoidance: they spoke to each other and Ego came and called on him from time to time. These attitudes were not completely symmetrical: the uncle seemed to consider his nephews only as nuisances. For him they brought ill-luck and they were treated accordingly: they were not allowed to look into his granaries or to milk his cows, and they ate with the servants. The uncle seemed to do all he could to induce them to keep away. But they visited him because there they met his children with whom they were traditionally permitted to have very familiar relationships. The maternal uncle was afraid that Ego would have intercourse with his daughter and that her betrothal to somebody else would thereby be broken. He was also afraid that if Ego married her he would not easily obtain bride-wealth from his brother-in-law. All these reasons were understandable enough.

¹⁸ We do not mention here the maternal half-siblings because they do not belong to their mother's descent group. They are referred to as *Mwene-mama* (child of mother).

THE SYSTEM OF KINSHIP AND AFFINITY

49

Why did they not operate in the case of FaSi? As mother of Ego's paternal cross-cousins, with whom Ego could enjoy the same familiarities, she could have reacted in the same way. We have seen that, on the contrary, she was extremely cordial to her nephews. The only reason seems to be that her nephews belonged to her own lineage, whereas her daughters did not. Consequently she was less interested in bride-wealths, &c. Her husband (FaSiHu) probably reacted in the same way as MoBr. 604

The relations of Ego with his maternal aunt (MoSi) were supposed to be similar to his relations with his mother, but in fact great trust and affection did not often exist between them because of the usually tense relations of the aunt with Ego's mother, her sister. If, for instance, Ego's aunt's husband (MoSiHu) neglected his wife and preferred his sister-in-law (Ego's Mo), with whom intercourse was not taboo, the relations between the two sisters became tense. The incest taboo applied to the relations between Ego and MoSi (as an extension of the incest prohibition between Ego and his Mo) and also MoSiDa (although she did not belong to Mo's inzu). In the latter case, the reason was that for Ego, his maternal parallel cousins were assimilated to his paternal parallel cousins. He had consequently to consider her as his sister. 604 835

In the next generation this incest taboo still existed (between So and MoSiDaDa, i.e. between any male and his FaMoSiDaDa). The incest between Ego's male descendants and his MoSi's female descendants through females lasted, I was told, as long as the original sibling relation (between Mo and MoSi) was remembered. [593]

Between Ego and his maternal grandfather, the relations were very similar to those between him and his paternal grandfather. 603

As we may expect, the fact that his maternal grandmother did not belong to the maternal patrilineage did not prevent her from being considered as a grandmother and not only as MoFaWi.

As has just been indicated, Ego could enjoy with his female maternal cross-cousins great familiarity expressed in practical jokes, pleasant talk, and erotic games. But as long as the girls were unmarried anything more than caressing and petting (erotic kissing seems to have been unknown among Ruanda) was prohibited. It was only after the female cross-cousins' marriages that sexual intercourse with them was tolerated. This behaviour was extended to wives of male cross-cousins (MoBrSoWi). 605 [832] [835]

78

THE PREMISE OF INEQUALITY IN RUANDA

833 under the man was not usually practised. In the polygynous family
 [595] the husband had to spend two nights with each wife *seriatim* and to have at least one intercourse.

The Ruanda thought that when the sex activity of an individual had begun, he could legitimately expect an opportunity to enjoy intercourse as frequently as was socially thought normal. Some
 864 parents were said to be severe towards sexual play among children. When the latter indulged in imitation of adult relations, in masturbation, and other manipulations, they were beaten and flogged. Others were more permissive.^a Homosexuality was
 838 common among young Tutsi when being trained at court, and was almost exclusively ascribed to the lack of heterosexual contacts.

831 Later in life, sex needs were regarded as requiring satisfaction just as any other natural need. If the husband or wife was not available, it was socially permitted to have another partner
 837 (among the privileged ones) even if the absent spouse resented it.
 835 The sexual needs of a woman were thought to be more urgent when she was pregnant; intercourse once a week was regarded as a
 [843] minimum. If her husband was absent, therefore, cohabitation
 [833] with one of his brothers or parallel cousins was viewed almost with favour. When a husband had been away for a very long time, and if it was not known even if he was still living, though his wife could not obtain a divorce she could cohabit and have children with one of her privileged partners, preferably belonging to her husband's patrilineage. A wife never accompanied her husband on his
 [593] travels to the court or elsewhere. In such cases the Tutsi took with
 [484] them a concubine, the daughter of a client for instance.

548 At the court of the king or of important chiefs, there were a few Tutsi women who were openly servants of the chief or the king (*abaja*). In fact they were courtesans, either the daughters of Tutsi clients of the chief or king, who had been invited by the chief or king to come to the court as servants because of their beauty, or divorced women. They received costly presents and were often well-off, having their own herds of cattle. These presents appear to have been rewards not only for sexual favours but also, and perhaps mainly, for some inside information so useful in that world of intrigue.

831 The preceding paragraphs should not be understood as implying that the Ruanda emphasised exclusively the physical and

^a Cf. Vincant, 1954, pp. 167-71.

833 were growing, when a child had his hair cut in tufts for the first time, at the initiation into the Ryangombe sect, when a daughter was asked to marry, on the wedding day of a son or a daughter, on the accession of a new king, at sowing time, and at the celebration for July harvesting. All these events were happy and joyful because they were growths or increases in life. Intercourse was also obligatory at the end of the mourning periods when life had to go on and start again after that period of abeyance.

This obligatory intercourse took place between husband and wife. When it was impossible because one of the spouses was absent or dead, one had to rely upon a privileged partner, or, if this was impossible, had to get medicine prepared from certain herbs by a diviner.

[853] There was no prohibition of intercourse between the spouses during the suckling months (the first eighteen to twenty-four).

(b) *Economic co-operation*

595 The nuclear family and, to a large extent each wife's compound
[594] in polygamous cases, was a self-sufficient unit of economic co-operation. Among rich Tutsi who could afford separate homesteads for their wives, each wife was in fact the superintendent of her own. She had to command her husband's clients, servants, cultivators, and herdsmen. It was no wonder that women who could be entrusted with such responsibilities were respected within their family and in society at large. If the homestead was small, as among ordinary Tutsi, or consisted only of a small cultivated plot, as among most Hutu polygamists, each of these wives had, nevertheless, some economic responsibility, even if it was only that of working by herself in the fields. This important participation of polygynous wives in the management of a small unit of production and consumption, should be studied in relation to the

562 status of women in Ruanda.⁹ This status was by no means equal to that of men but it was far from being one of slavery. Tutsi husbands and wives ate together, the wife was consulted by her husband on many problems, and she was treated with much politeness. The Hutu were ruder and more temperamental, but they followed a more or less similar pattern. Under the present administration there are two or three women, widows of Tutsi chiefs, who act as sub-chiefs. The mere fact that it is taken for

⁹ See Ndagijuki, 1959.

MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

85

woman's divorce was not yet completely settled (i.e. if the exchange of marriage-gifts and counter-gifts had not taken place), the former husband was still regarded as a pater of the child and the genitor had to pay him the child-wealth, if he wanted to have the child. 851 586

My male informants affirmed not to know of any contraceptives and they did not think that women knew better. In Ruanda culture, they would probably have been used exclusively for premarital relations. One informant, however, stressed the fact that too many pregnancies were bad for very poor people not having enough cow-milk and goat-milk to give to their babies, who then often died from malnutrition or from intestinal diseases (goat-milk was regarded as vermifugal). A certain herb called *umuhoko* was known for its abortive effects and used sometimes by pregnant unmarried girls with the help of their mother. 842 [935] [853] 847 824

(d) Socialization

The young Ruanda spent the first years of his life in his mother's compound. There the first stages of the long process of his socialization, which was completed only after he had achieved marriage and parenthood, took place. 854 [885]

In matters of education, as in others, the supreme authority in the compound was the father. The paternal uncle could discipline his nephews and nieces only when they were in his compound or when the father was not present. His role was that of a substitute for the father. The maternal uncle had no authority except where the bride-wealth had not been paid. The mother had no authority of her own and had to be backed up by the father. It is clear, however, that in everyday life and particularly when the children were young, the mother was a disciplinarian and the main agent of socialization. 855 593 604

The training for the different activities expected to be mastered by any member of his caste began early for the child. From weaning (when they were about two years old) to the age of five, children were supposed to be clean, quiet, and not to wander far from the compound. Not later than five years old, children began to collect wood, to carry water, to watch goats and calves. A ten-year-old boy was taught how to handle a hoe and worked with his father in the fields. A girl learned how to light a fire, to brush, and to carry out the household duties of a woman. Boys from twelve to 857 [862] 868 857 000

86

THE PREMISE OF INEQUALITY IN RUANDA

883 Boys from twelve To
 [224] fifteen were in charge of cattle herds and were absent for several days and nights from the compound. They also hunted with their fathers.

869 Even before puberty, some socialization processes took place outside of the nuclear or polygamous family. Mythological tales about the material world, the origin of man and animal species, the arrival of the Tutsi in Ruanda, beliefs concerning *Imana*, the spirits of the dead and other beings from the invisible world, the history of the kings of Ruanda, of the military conquests, folk-lore and poems about cattle, and stories of the ancestors and the lineage heroes were transmitted to the younger generation by the grandfather. He was also the main agent of education in the modes of behaviour indicating what was to be done and what was to be avoided in order to gain social approval.

882 Between puberty and marriage the further education of Tutsi boys took place at the court of a chief or of the king. Hutu stayed in the paternal compound, mastering the different techniques of cultivation and also the attitude and abilities necessary for them to be appreciated by the lord. Sometimes the young man replaced his father in the service of the lord.

595 What has been said in this section up to now applied equally to each compound of the polygynous family. Children of different wives were not brought up together. In each compound the mother had a role very similar to that of the mother in a nuclear family. There was no head-wife. Usually one was preferred by the husband (*inkundwakazi*, the favourite one), but because of her qualities (obedience, tidiness, beauty, &c.), and not because she was the first married. But the fact that the eldest son of the first wife often succeeded to the father, gave her a particular importance and respect by the others because, after the husband's death, all of them would probably be dependent on her eldest son.

595 The mutual behaviour of wives and their children has been mentioned before. It may be summarized as: respect to the favourite wife and the first wife, and good 'fraternal' relations between all the wives and the children. This was the ideal behaviour which was often overtly maintained as long as the husband was living. But according to all our informants, the modal and covert behaviour was jealousy and hatred. A polygynous family was often designated by the word *amshali*, whose root *ishyali* means jealousy, and one wife used to refer to another as her *mukuba*, rival. In these

MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

conditions it was evidently impossible to socialize and to educate together all the children of the same polygynous family.

The father had very considerable authority to punish during the period of the educational processes, and could even go as far as to curse and disinherit his sons. He could not use such drastic punishments for daughters except in the case of a pregnancy of an unmarried one. Then she could be killed, but mainly because such an event was regarded as being unlucky for the whole lineage. This case has to be interpreted in connexion with those others in which the father could condemn a daughter to death for fear of her conveying ill-luck: these were should her breasts not develop or should she have no periods. The father could appeal to the inzu head when he was unable to discipline his children and the married children could appeal to him when they had been punished by sanctions they found too heavy.

(e) *Ritual function*

The inzu ancestor was honoured mainly in the compound of the patrilineage head. A small hut was devoted to him and on certain occasions all his descendants met to make offerings to him. Some of these occasions were fixed, others were decided only after consulting a diviner.

In each compound there was also a small hut dedicated to the spirits of the dead, where the ancestor of the patrilineage was honoured. The wife could not build there a hut for her own ancestors. Nearer forbears were honoured in the compound more than the inzu's ancestors: the husband's grandfather or great-grandfather. The husband introduced his wife to him saying: 'Here is the woman I have taken in order to beget children for you, to multiply your lineage.' The bull used for stud purposes was also presented to the great-grandfather's spirit. Not only forbears but other dead members of the patrilineage or the family were honoured, but less often.

Almost every day small offerings were made. A few drops of milk or of beer, or some beans or peas were thrown into the hut. Or a girl spent some time in the ancestor's hut to enable him to enjoy a woman. But sometimes the spirits required more.

We have mentioned earlier that they were often angry and could send illnesses, sterility, cattle-epidemics, and death. They were regarded as beneficial only in a negative way, i.e. when they did

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92 THE PREMISE OF INEQUALITY IN RUANDA

422 Sometimes these rights (bare ownership and usufruct) were possessed by the same person. The cattle concerned were then called *imbata*.³

3. INHERITANCE RULES

768 When the father died, the family unit of which he had been the head did not disappear as well. Some of the family functions had still to be carried on for some time: the younger sons had to be given a wife and the bride-wealth paid for them, the younger daughters had to be married, and perhaps young children had still to be taken care of by their mother for several years. In order that the family unit should be able to perform its tasks before its breakdown, it was necessary that the duties of the *urugo* head should continue to be fulfilled. Consequently the father chose one of his
592 sons who could be trusted with that role (*umutware w'urugo rwa se*: head of his father's family). He was often, but not always, the eldest son of the first wife. The father could even choose a brother or one of his parallel cousins if he thought none of his sons was capable. The father's choice could always be reversed by the lineage head or the political chief or even the lord, if it appeared unwise to these authorities or if it was the cause of complaints from the other members of the family.

593 It was the father who was endowed, as we have just seen, with
421 rights to land and cattle. The totality of these rights plus goods such as trees, huts, and household implements, constituted his patrimony.

428 If there was no declaration of will, custom determined the division of the patrimony according to the following rules.

The first heirs were the sons of the deceased, or, failing these, his brothers, then his paternal male parallel cousins, his grandsons, the sons of his brothers and their male paternal parallel cousins, his paternal uncles. Then any male in the *inzu* or the *umulyango*. If there was no known kinsman left, the political authority (land or cattle chief) or the lord was the heir. In that case the patrimony might be divided according to the kind of rights left, for instance those over cattle went to the lord, those over land to the land chief. Or the more powerful authority was able to secure for himself the whole of the inheritance.

³ See Vanhove. 1941, pp. 48-59, for still other, but less important, rights over cattle.

428 without having been cursed but by being guilty of some major disobedience or lack of respect towards his father, such as beating him. The father could also give a greater share to the sons he preferred, but this had to be justified on grounds other than his personal feelings. It had to appear as a reward for particular devotion or good behaviour. The father could not skip a category of traditionally defined successors and still less could he leave his rights to non-relatives. The persons who felt that they had been wronged could always appeal to the different authorities mentioned.

428 As may be expected, matters of inheritance were causes of
518 suspicion, rivalries, and disputes among the sons. Each wanted to
be favoured by his father. Even if there was no will, an equal
division of goods and rights so different in kind was not easy to
[43] achieve, particularly in a society without money or any other
standard of value.³

4. LABOUR

461 Much labour had to be expended on the soil and on the stock
to produce consumer goods. It was, therefore, not sufficient for
466 the producer to possess a certain amount of capital (land, cattle),
he had also to control labour. What were his rights over the labour
of various individuals?

• 593 The labour of wives, unmarried sons, and daughters belonged
461 almost exclusively to the father, head of the rugo. He could make
all these dependants work in the rugo fields and he could require
his sons to give tribute labour to the political authorities in his
stead or to carry out services for his lord.

466 The different political authorities had rights over the labour
of their subjects. These rights were limited either to certain
tasks (e.g. to build or to mend the chief's enclosure), or to certain
periods of time (e.g. two days each week). The mwami, the
[43] supreme political authority, did not usually require more than a
chief but in theory all the men of Ruanda belonged to him and
he could demand all their labour as well as take their lives.

According to the 'agreement' by which the lord granted the
usufruct on certain cows, the client had, in return, to give a not
precisely limited number of days of work. These labour rights
and duties were inherited with the bare ownership and the usu-
fruct of the cattle.

³ See also Bourgeois, 1954, pp. 344 ff.

ECONOMIC PRODUCTION

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Servants' labour belonged completely to their masters. These servants (*abatindi* for men, *abaja* for women) were either war captives or simply very poor people (this is the first meaning of the word *abatindi*). Their payment consisted in receiving food, shelter, and clothing from their masters. Sometimes it was agreed that after a certain period of time (such as three years) the master would either pay the bride-wealth to provide the servant with a wife or would even give him his own daughter.

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Family heads were the only persons who could dispose of their own labour resources, with the exception of that part required by the lord and the political authority.

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Almost any Ruanda family head could command enough rights to capital goods and labour to make his rugo self-supporting, with a certain surplus for his chief and his overlord. But these rights were not finally his. The ultimate control of the factors of production was not his. Labour, land, and cattle, in that order, were increasingly slipping away from his control. Command of the factors of production and political power was so interwoven in Ruanda social structure that they are to be analysed together in the following chapter devoted to the political organization.

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Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

and Tutsikazi are tall, dignified and elegant; they know how to give the impression of great control, of intelligence and of refinement. Hutu and Hutukazi are plainly farmers, short and sturdy, clumsy, made for work, and they seem to be vulgar, stupid, incapable of controlling their emotions or of speaking well. Nothing has so far been said of the poor Twa: like the Rundi, we have forgotten them. The Twa, pariahs, are, say the Rundi, without shame. They eat anything, they employ bad language. It is necessary to pay them for the pots their women make, for no Rundi will participate in economic exchanges of gifts and services or in social relations with them. We shall see further on that the stereotypes of superiors and inferiors according to caste can be used also in describing all other superior-inferior relationships. [438]

To complete the description of the hierarchical order of Rundi society, it is necessary to include the kinship system. The familial hierarchy has the same pattern as the social hierarchy. All benefactors are called *umuvyeyi*, parent. The *mwami* is like a benevolent father, it is said, who likes the Rundi, his children. The nursing mother is the symbol of feminine generosity. The best way to thank a benefactress is by means of the formula: I am a nursing child at your generous breasts, or alternatively: you are to me as a freshened cow. The herders sometimes argue about the relative superiority of women and cows; both sources of milk appear to have their partisans. 601

Whatever the position of an individual in the social hierarchy, he will also have his place in the familial hierarchy. The head of a patrilineage, prince or pariah, is at the summit of the familial hierarchy. He is the *mukuru*, the highest, the oldest by rank, though not necessarily by chronological age. He speaks first, he drinks first, he must be respected and obeyed by his brothers, his sons, and the women of the patrilineage. The household consisting of a man and his wife and children is the smallest independent unit of Rundi society. There, the father of the family is *nyene rugo*, the master of his household. His children and his wife—if he is polygamous, his wives—owe him respect and obedience. Addressed in the familiar by his superiors, the father of the family addresses his inferiors in the familiar, in his capacity as a patriarch of almost absolute power. His wife kneels before him when she offers him his gourd of beer, and his child kneels before him to receive his blessing. (The Old Testament comes inevitably to mind at the sight.) Sons receive a part of their father's property as their inheritance not later than the time they receive a wife but are all their lives subjugated to their father's authority. The father chooses one of his

Ethel M. Albert

592 sons as his heritor. The mother chooses one of her daughters as her
 593 heritor, to whom she will leave her clothing, her baskets and her
 428 pot of perfumed butter. Daughters inherit nothing from their
 [591] father. Sooner or later, they leave his property to go to live with
 their husbands. Nevertheless, when a woman says, "my home",
 she is referring to her father's kraal. All her life she is, like her
 562 brothers, under her father's authority. After marriage she must also
 593 obey her husband, but her father will always have the greater
 authority over her. She herself is the superior of her younger sisters,
 of her children, and if there are any, of the inferiors, servants and
 serfs of her husband.

554 The inferiority of women as women is only a special case of the
 562 general form of inferiority in Rundi society. However, both men and
 women have multiple roles in society. As a result, the superiority and
 inferiority of an individual are relative, rather than absolute, except
 for the *mwami* at the top of the hierarchy and the poor little Twakazi
 at the bottom. It has already been indicated that a social superior
 is sometimes inferior in the hierarchy of politics and economics.
 Also, the eldest brother may be the inferior of the youngest, in the
 likely event that the latter is chosen as the father's heritor. A
 [561] Tutsikazi, the social inferior of her father and husband (provided
 the latter is not a Hutu), is nevertheless the superior of all the Hutu
 and Twa, of her children and those Tutsi who are the inferiors of
 her husband. Each Rundi must learn his place in relation to that
 of every other, calculate the distance and direction of the relation-
 ship, and find his way as well as he can through the social
 labyrinth.

554 Despite the striking simplicity of its structure, the social hierarchy
 557 of Burundi allows for mobility and for some very complex varia-
 578 tions in conduct. There is incontestable evidence of both constant
 efforts of men and women to improve their positions in society
 and of the associated phenomena of social instability and of fierce
 competition among the inferiors of a given superior. One may
 [183] risk the generalization that the norms and rules dictated by the
 social structure will not survive a conflict with the values of wealth
 and power. One may say also that the greater the wealth and
 power of the superior, the more acute the rivalry and the more
 bitter the struggles among his inferiors. Thus, quarrels among
 Hutu, who are usually very poor, are rarely more than noisy spats
 quickly forgotten, while the silent hatreds of the Tutsi, born of the
 desire to own cows, sometimes explode in murder and fratricide.
 [545] Quarrels among sisters, who inherit nothing of value, are rarely as
 bitter or prolonged as quarrels among brothers. On the other hand,

Ethel M. Albert

431 he will not give; and if he wishes, he will take back what he has
 554 already given in order to give it to someone he likes better. An
 inferior, whether it be the serf of a Tutsi or a wife in relation to
 her husband, can protest only in vain that he has worked hard, that
 he has always been docile and obedient, that he has always liked
 and respected his superior. There are no formal sanctions against
 a superior who accepts services and goods from his inferior and
 gives him nothing in return. However, there are more subtle
 431 measures to be taken against him. An inferior, if he has any
 554 alternative open to him, will abandon an ungenerous superior.
 626 Sometimes a Tutsi deserts a prince who has not given him cows
 or a subchiefdom, in order to enter service with one who is more
 generous and powerful. A son may leave the property of his father
 564 if he is not satisfied with his heritage and will enter service with a
 stranger who promises to give him lands and cows. A woman will
 593 return to her father's home if her husband mistreats her, and ask
 her father to find her a better husband. When those who are dis-
 satisfied complain publicly about ungenerous superiors, they will
 have difficulty in replacing the inferiors who desert them. However,
 if one does not find another superior with whom to take refuge, it
 is necessary to stay with the bad one and to resign oneself to
 unhappiness, sometimes to hunger, sometimes to death. For,
 554 physical violence is the privilege of the superior. It is up to him to
 681 instruct and correct his inferiors by words and blows. Or, if he is
 in a bad humour, his inferiors are always around, and he can take
 861 out his displeasure on them. Children expect to be beaten by their
 566 parents, serfs and servants by their master and mistress, and a
 593 woman, even an *imfura*, considers it quite normal for her husband
 to beat her, especially if she has been difficult or if he has had a
 good deal to drink. According to the ideal, a superior is always
 benevolent, generous, wise and just. Beating does not suggest a
 lack of affection. If the superior does not give presents to his
 inferior, then it is known that he does not like him.

431 In principle, *umutima*, sentiment (literally, "the heart"), is always
 554 combined with the material value of a gift. *Urukundo*, love or
 828 affection, rather than law or rights, explains the gifts of superiors
 and the services rendered by inferiors. It is possible that the Rundi
 insist so much upon the importance of sentiment and love because
 152 they have so little of them. However this may be, there is no
 doubting their joy and sense of well-being when they receive even
 the smallest present. However, they mistrust *urukundo*: love can
 change to hate very quickly, they say. Inferiors are always afraid
 that the superior will stop liking them or will send them packing

Ethel M. Albert

554 always loyal and devoted. The *umutoni* is before all else an informer.
 571 It is the way to show his interest in the well-being of his superior. It is for this that he is favoured and given gifts. Men who are poor or women who are by law without property, if they know how to play the role of the inferior effectively, can become rich, have their advice heeded, and find life most agreeable.

Attitudes and behaviour change according to role. Everyone has his turn as an inferior, if not to a human being, then to *Imana*. Adult Rundi have their turn as superiors to their children and to various others according to their rank. There is an astonishing ease and rapidity of psychological change according to the situation.
 [586] The very man who explains to you today that he has sent his wife back home because she did not work enough, will tell you tomorrow that he was dismissed by his master for no other reason than that his enemies calumniated him—he does not see that he has been disobedient or lazy. A woman who has just served her husband his dinner from a humble, kneeling position, on leaving the house, gives haughty, authoritative commands to the men who work for her. Like any other superior, a woman as the mistress of her house, as a mother, and as an elder sister, commands and punishes. She is respected, she chooses her favourites, and her inferiors ask her for presents. When her role is that of an inferior, she must be obedient, she must work, she must ask for presents, she tries to win the affection of her superior, and she is jealous of those who receive presents.

461 The Rundi conception of the innate differences between men and women is as well-defined as their conception of the innate
 562 differences among the various castes and of much the same content.

564 Both Tutsi and Hutu and men and women agree on the stereotypic differences of physique and of psychology between the two sexes. To begin with, it is believed that women are better suited by nature than men for manual labour. They work better and longer in the fields than men. The Hutukazi are able to carry on their heads

[482] burdens twice as heavy as those which men can carry. It is generally known that there are more old men than old women and that women age more quickly than men. The Rundi refuse categorically
 [165] the hypothesis that those who work harder die younger. Men and women both insist that women are made for work and that they die younger because of the hardships of child-bearing. It is nonetheless
 [842] believed that the male role is more important than that of the female in procreation. Woman, says the proverb, is only the passive earth; it is the man who provides the seed.

562 Stronger than men, women are thought to be less agile. Conse-

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Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

quently, in domestic battles, the husband can vanquish the wife. He must, nevertheless, be on his guard if she becomes very angry. For, even though men (as superiors) are able to control their anger, women (as inferiors) are likely to lose their heads. She can take a knife and kill her husband, says the Hutu; she will poison her husband, says the Tutsi. Furthermore, women are regarded as less courageous than men in the presence of enemies; they are more easily discouraged when there is misfortune; they cry more easily; and they do not conceal their emotions. No attention whatever is paid to any evidence which might contradict the stereotype. 562 593

A man who is jealous of his wife's lovers is considered an imbecile. Particularly among the rich, a wife can show her fidelity to her husband's interests by going to bed with his superiors, if by this means she can calm the superior or obtain valuable information from him. Out of delicacy, the husband visits his neighbours when his superior comes to call. On the other hand, most family troubles are explained by the presumably unlimited capacity of women for jealousy. At marriage, a Rundikazi is supposed to be a virgin. Once she is married, it is said, she has great and constant need for sexual satisfaction. A man is privileged, if not obliged, to sleep with all his wives, the wives of his brothers and of his parallel cousins, his female cross-cousins, the wives of his male cross-cousins, the sisters and female cross- and parallel-cousins of his wife, and various other ladies. The kinship system is obviously a highly classificatory one. Nevertheless, men must discharge their sexual obligations in secret. If a husband finds his wife in bed with another man, he is morally obligated to beat his wife and to quarrel a little with the man. Far more serious, if a woman sees her husband entering the house of his sister-in-law, there will be no more peace for him at home. A woman, it was explained, is jealous of those with whom her husband sleeps, because the others will perhaps get presents out of him that she wants for herself, or perhaps one of the other women will speak against her to persuade her husband to divorce her. If there appear to be contradictions here, it is probably due to the lack of a truly Rundi perspective. 152 593 837 557 831 833 607 578

It is not for nothing, say the Rundi, that the wives of a polygamist are called *abakeba*, rivals.¹¹ Each woman watches every other wife—the presents she has received from her husband, the size of the property she has been given to cultivate and as an inheritance for her sons, the cows given for her household, the number of children she has; the number of nights the husband spends with her. To calumniate one's *abakeba*, to poison them, to quarrel with them, to give the husband *inzaratsi*—the potion that 152 595 832

Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

mother how to farm and to carry burdens on their heads. At 12, boys and girls should be able to work well and independently. If not, they are beaten or deprived of their dinner to encourage them to learn. There is, nevertheless, time to play with other children, the boys with other boys, the girls with other girls. 562 868

Moral taboos have no significance before adolescence. Children may eat anything at all, without penalty. A young girl may milk a cow: she is not yet a woman, say the Rundi, she is still like her brother. Brothers and sisters sleep together in the same bed and are covered by the same mat. If sometimes there are sexual experiments, these are not called incest. They are only children, they are not responsible, they cannot sin. At puberty, a young girl is removed from the common bedroom of the children. Boys seem to mature much later than girls. Moreover, the question of the dowry enters to delay their marriage. It is said that girls want to be married very early. By the time they have reached puberty, they have already begun to play with other young girls, each helping the other to develop the private parts to a maximum size in anticipation of the pleasures of the marriage bed. A mother warns her daughter that she must absolutely remain a virgin until her marriage, or, at least, that she does not dare to become pregnant if she has not yet been asked for and paid for. In the past, an unmarried mother-to-be would have been killed and her father's property confiscated. Today, there are illegitimate children, and nobody knows quite what to do with them. (One way in which a disgruntled wife can revenge herself upon her husband is by allowing a grown daughter to become pregnant before she is paid for.) At all events, it is up to the mother of a nubile daughter to watch her carefully. 858 [262] 593 513 [673] 881 856 864 183 831 178 848 [593]

Very strong taboos forbid all contact between a father and his daughter after she has been weaned, except for mutual greetings and for several minor services which a daughter performs for her father.¹³ It is customary for girls to wear only a skirt while working, and in the past, a young girl might wear nothing at all or only a leopard skin around her hips. A father must avert his eyes if a daughter is working with her bosom exposed. If a father wishes some information about his daughter, or if he wishes to say something to her, he must ask his wife to speak to their daughter. If a young girl is to be punished, it is the mother who will beat her, never the father. The same taboos apply to the father's brothers. All are called *data*, father. Fathers never enter the house in which a married daughter lives with her husband. The explanation offered for these strong taboos to separate father from mature 593 784 [291] [861] [604]

Ethel M. Albert

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784 daughter is the necessity to prevent incest. The taboo is strong enough to serve as the basis of the oath in court. A man "swears on his daughter", by saying, "If a lie, may I do that act with my daughter, the one named such-and-such".

581 Despite the physical and social distance between father and daughter, they are jointly interested in the earliest possible marriage for her. She is impatient for the pleasures and privileges of the married woman. He is looking forward to the dowry, which he keeps entirely for himself. It is possible that a mother will do her best to put off the marriage. She does not stand to profit from it at all. On the contrary, the departure of her daughter diminishes the available labour supply for work in the home and in the fields. Young people brought up in the homes of the great must wait a

582 long time before their master or mistress will allow them to leave to be married. The *inchoreke*, young women of good family who are the personal servants of princes and princesses, are often 25 years old before they are married. The *abakamyi*, young men of good family who milk for the great families, are sometimes 35 or 40 at marriage. Among the commoners, the children of the wealthy are able to marry early, the girls at 15 or 16 and the boys at 18. Poor people envy them and have to wait five to ten years longer before they can be married.

584 A girl's father waits for a visit from a man who is looking for a wife for his son. Sometimes, a boy may ask his father to dower a young girl to whom he has taken a fancy. However, it is the two fathers who decide everything. Neither the girl nor the boy need be formally advised of their father's decisions. Nevertheless, a father will probably tell his son and a mother will tell her daughter.

[564] If not, a girl among the Tutsi of western Burundi will guess that she is engaged from the arrival of the prescribed number of pots of beer from the family asking for her and from the gifts of beer and food sent by relatives for the celebration. She will guess the approach of the wedding day most easily from the construction of the *indaro*, a temporary dwelling, in her father's yard, where she will live with her husband for the first year of the marriage. (On the wedding day, the girl's father must absent himself from his house.)

591 If the new husband and wife are satisfied with each other and if they have a child, they will leave to take up permanent residence on the property the young husband has received from his father.

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[184] The Tutsi in the east of Burundi and the Hutu marry at the home of the groom's father. It is then the young man who deduces from the activities in the household that he will soon be married. The intended bride should properly be told who her intended bride-

Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

groom is so that she can obey the rule forbidding her to look at or speak to the man she is to marry. There are nonetheless young people, orphans or children whose parents are inconsiderate, who do not know until the wedding day that arrangements have been made to marry them. If this happens to a young girl, it is said, she becomes very frightened by the sudden necessity to go perhaps very far away to live with a strange family and with a man whom she has probably never seen. Although the young girl receives new clothes from the family of her bridegroom, although she goes to her new home accompanied by a representative of her family and by her friends and cousins (neither her mother nor her father may attend the wedding at the groom's home), the happy dreams of marriage change into nightmares. The bride is hardly reassured by a wedding ceremony that is a symbolic kidnapping. The hostility between the two patrilineages is supposed to be play-acting, but under the influence of beer, it often becomes genuine quarrelling. Weddings are almost invariably marked by arguments and mutual criticisms which are sometimes very bitter. In truth, hatred for a husband may still burn in the memory of an elderly lady as she speaks of her wedding of 50 years ago, if she had not been told in advance and if her husband on their wedding night behaved like a wild young man and took her by force and against her will. If the groom and parents-in-law are kind, they will be able to calm the fears of a bride. For the four days of the honeymoon, they are indulgent towards her. The husband and his brothers give her little gifts to persuade her to eat, they bribe her so that she will talk to them, and the mother-in-law sends beer and food. In this way, she can become accustomed to her new home.

A father who is wise and kind chooses a good husband for his daughter. He will point out that a bad marriage is not worth the trouble. If soon after the marriage his daughter returns home with a legitimate reason for having left her husband, the father will have to return the dowry and wait for someone else to come and ask for his daughter. It sometimes happens that a father is more interested in the dowry than in the happiness of his daughter. He will then accept the first offer made him, even if it comes from a man he knows is bad, or, scandal of scandals, from an old man. (The latter connotes incest, involving as it does a male of an older generation than the female.) Or, if the father is dead, a girl may be given by her paternal uncle to anyone who comes along. Men of this kind do not allow the women to come back home again when they are dissatisfied with their husbands. An orphan or the daughter of a bad father will have the good luck to please

Ethel M. Albert

593 her husband and to have a good life with him only if she is liked
776 by *Imana*.

564 The dowry represents wealth for the father. The average Tutsi
583 expects to receive a cow for his daughter, an average Hutu eight
[556] hoes. However, today the Hutu often and the Tutsi sometimes pay
[178] the dowry in cash. For the husband, the dowry purchases the
children produced by the woman during the term of their marriage.
For the young woman, the dowry is a measure of her social value.
She has discussed with other girls how much a man will have to
give for her. Young Tutsikazi flatter each other by saying that they
are certainly worth four cows—the dowry of a Tutsikazi of a very
good patrilineage. A Hutukazi may boast of the 2,500 Congo
francs (50 dollars) that were given for her, for everyone knows that
1,500 Congo francs (30 dollars) is the average for a Hutukazi. Or,
a poor woman who is slightly mad is overcome by shame, for
everyone knows that her father has given her in marriage without
demanding a dowry. The more one has given for a young woman,
the higher her social status. The wife of a wealthy man will have
more clothes and less work, more respect and less hardship, than
the wife of a poor man.

[554] Although a young woman looks forward to marriage to rise
[556] above her painfully low status as a female child, she knows very
562 well that what lies before her is a lifetime of work and that she
585 will for a long time be under the authority of others. She is in effect
sent from her father's household, where she works for her mother,
to her husband's household, where she works for her husband and
her mother-in-law. Regarding the sentiments of the husband
towards his wife, or of men in general towards women, it is enough
[538] to mention that in the rich oral literature of Burundi, there is not
one poem or song of love. At best, among the *amazina*—praise-
[533] poems, most of which praise the king or a generous patron or the
man himself as a warrior—there are several which praise a good
wife. She is praised for her cleverness, for her indefatigable efforts
on behalf of her husband, for the cleanness of the butter she churns,
and she may be given the compliment of comparison with a cow. In
all truth, a man may sometimes have a great love, or be infatuated
[152] with his wife or his mistress. He does not talk about it very much;
he would certainly not talk about it with strangers. At all events,
love is not relevant to married life except in the general form it
takes as the basis of the exchange of gifts and services between
superiors and inferiors.

591 Every married woman of every class and caste works for her
[593] husband. Often a bride goes to live in the same household with her

Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

mother-in-law or with a sister-in-law, though sometimes she may be alone on a part of her husband's property at some distance from his father's household. The social division of labour assigns to women nearly total responsibility for anything that is related to food, small children and the house. Men are rarely at home. Among the herders, the men are out in the pastures with the cattle. During the dry season, they may have to go for pasture a long way from home and build temporary dwellings for the season. A Hutu farmer works in the fields of his master, and these may be very far from the plot of land granted him for himself and his family.¹³ The wives of a polygamist are each in turn necessarily alone. Moreover, men often have to go on trips for their superiors or to look after their own interests. Sometimes a trip lasts only two or three days, sometimes the man is absent from home for several months or for an entire year. We see here the continuing influence of an earlier day of a military, feudal society. Before 1920, every Tutsi was obliged to put in military service at the court of his prince. His wife sent him food, and he visited her at home from time to time, but he had to spend many months in service. Hutu sometimes went to war, but most of them stayed on the property of their feudal masters to work. Even today, young Rundi, both Hutu and Tutsi, leave home to earn money for the dowry and then very soon after marriage leave again to make money for other purposes. They work for their Rundi superiors, or in Uganda, or Tanganyika, or the European cities of Burundi. As administrators, as porters, as cowherds, they travel a great deal. The women are responsible for the household during the frequent and often prolonged absences of the men.

In all other things the inferior of her husband, a Rundikazi is absolute proprietor of the food supply. The land she farms is her husband's. The husband gives her orders to work and decides what will be grown, and the husband inspects the granaries and the pots of butter. However, it is strictly forbidden for men to take so much as a handful of beans, raw or cooked, or a bit of butter without the wife's permission. If one asks what would happen to a man who might steal food from his wife, it is said: that doesn't happen, nobody would drink with that sort of fellow. This rule is taken very seriously. If a man wants food for himself for any reason, he must grow it himself. He may not touch any of the food raised by his wife. It is said that the woman has raised the food even when the farmhands and the serfs of the husband have done the actual work. What is meant is that the household food supply is always under the control of the wife.

Ethel M. Albert

562 Hutukazi have as their first duty cultivating the husband's fields.
 564 During the two or three weeks before the rainy season, a woman
 241 leaves the house each day a little after sunrise, pregnant or a baby
 on her back and another child trailing behind her, hoe in hand.
 She must prepare the soil and sow the seed. Once or twice during
 the rainy season, she must weed the peas, beans and millet. At
 harvest time, she is again very busy for two or three weeks.¹⁴ She
 must harvest the crops and must carry it from the fields to her yard
 in bundles of from 30 to 50 kilograms on her head; there she must
 dry and clean what she has harvested. Finally, she stores the food
 [251] in large storage baskets and brews the sorghum beer. Between the
 [574] planting season and the harvest, there is leisure for visits to her
 517 mother or sister, to take it easy at home, to gossip with a neigh-
 bour, and to weave baskets.

462 Daily, a woman must prepare meals, watch and instruct her
 512 children, and pick up around the house and yard. In the morning,
 564 the pot of beans or peas for the evening meal must be set on the
 [267] three-stone hearth to cook. In mid-morning, work is stopped for
 breakfast, the cold leftovers from the previous evening's dinner. If
 there is no child old enough to send, a woman must herself return
 at intervals to the house from the fields or from the house of her
 [313] neighbour to add firewood to the fire. Each day she must draw
 415 water from the spring and carry it back in her 20-litre pot on her
 482 head to the house, and she must cut firewood and carry it back to
 the house on her head. Every few days she must sweep the yard
 and the packed-dirt floors of the house and change the straw on
 [356] the beds, especially if her husband will be staying with her that
 night. It is also necessary every week to grind the sorghum, cassava,
 [252] or maize into flour for *umudsima*, a polenta eaten with each meal.
 Ordinarily, a woman does the work only for her own house.
 [606] However, a mother-in-law has the right to assign tasks—other than
 [574] cooking—to her daughters-in-law. There is especially great need
 for help when there are visitors. It is necessary to prepare beer
 and food, and if they stay the night, a bed must be made ready.

462 When the husband is home, he will probably help his wife to
 564 clear a new plot of ground or to sow or harvest, according to the
 543 season. If he does not like to do woman's work, he stays at home
 while his wife goes to the fields or he visits a neighbour who has
 beer. If the husband is at home, he will probably be the one to
 chase away the animals who try to get into the yard at night or
 who are foraging for food in the fields. If he is not home, the wife
 has to look after these matters. If at night, a hyena, having scented
 the goat or the sheep in the yard, tries to enter, the woman will

Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

pick up a piece of firewood and chase the hyena. However, if she hears thieves or a lion or antelope or wild pigs in the fields, she gives the cry of alarm so that the neighbours will come to help her. One need not think that the Rundi consider a woman courageous who is at home alone night after night with several babies and who chases away wild animals and thieves.¹⁸

In a Tutsi household, all of the tasks of the Hutu household must be done and in addition those which result from the fact that the houses and the yard are used as corral and barns. If a Tutsikazi is lucky, her husband is wealthy enough to provide her with Hutu to do the farming and with one or more Hutu or Tutsi girls to help her in the house and yard. If this is the case, the Tutsikazi's job is to command and supervise others. However, even a Tutsukazi of a very good patrilineage will very likely have to work at least a little in the fields and do some cooking and other household chores. Whether it is the wife, a daughter, or a servant girl, somebody has to clean the yard after the cows have been taken to pasture. The cow dung has to be collected and taken to the fields where it is needed as fertilizer. Fresh earth has to be spread over the puddles and mud that the cows have left, and it is necessary to look in on the calves that are kept in the various houses of the dwelling unit. If a calf or a child or a Hutu is sick, the mistress of the house must prepare the medicine. The wife of a herder has as her first obligation the proper care of the milk which her husband or the boy who milks the cow gives into her care in the morning and the evening. She lets it accumulate so that she can churn every few days. Then, she must clean the butter and put aside some to be used for cooking, some to be mixed with red ochre to be used as a cosmetic, some to anoint the mats of the bed when her husband is at home. If the family is not rich enough to pay a herd boy and if the sons are still young, the Tutsi husband and wife take turns watching over the cows at night. At dawn, both may sleep: thieves will not come once it is daylight.

The richer one is, the more serfs and servants there are to do the work in the house and the fields and to attend to the cattle. Among the very wealthy, the wife is primarily the administrator of her husband's property. She supervises the workers, she gives them orders, she punishes those who misbehave and those who are lazy, and she receives visitors, who are frequently men of high position. The proper education of a Tutsikazi of good family is the responsibility either of her mother or of the princess in whose household she is brought up. There is hope that a daughter will be married by a wealthy man, that she will be literally a *mwamikazi* who will never have to do menial tasks.

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Ethel M. Albert

867 never have to do menial tasks. Young girls are taught, so that they will be refined, to command and to correct inferiors gently but firmly; to weave pretty baskets; to rub red and yellow ochre on the wooden milk pots which are lined up on a long shelf to display the herder's wealth; to offer beer and food to visitors and to sing and dance, breasts bared, to entertain them. Later, a young woman must learn to cover her face with her scarf, to so arrange her numerous diaphanous white and yellow robes that her entire body is covered, and to engage visitors in conversation while shielded from view by a screen. She must learn how to listen and to understand. If a young girl has noticed that her mother is a good conversationalist, she takes into account the fact that her mother is discreet, intelligent and older than she.

577 The more closely a woman approximates to the feminine ideal for her caste, the greater her hope for the rewards due to a married woman. A good wife should receive from her husband a quantity of clothes and jewels proportionate to his wealth, permission to go out and to visit where she wishes, permission to drink her husband's beer and to take snuff. In addition she will be praised wherever her husband travels. If the husband has cows, he will give her several so that she and the children will have milk, and he may give her one or more as gifts. If he likes her very much, he will plan in advance the means by which she can remain on his property if he predeceases her. To be a good wife means first of all to execute wifely tasks efficiently. Then, towards her husband and parents-in-law, a good wife is always obedient and respectful, at least while there are outsiders present. Intelligence is a highly desirable characteristic and is indeed indispensable in anyone who will be the wife of a prince. A capable woman will be consulted by her husband, especially if he knows that she is cleverer than he. Among the Hutu, the husband asks advice of an intelligent wife before he goes to ask a cow of a Tutsi, before choosing a wife for their son, before he does anything. Among the Tutsi, a husband who takes pride in his wife's intelligence will consult her before he chooses a serf, goes to his superior to ask for another cow. He does nothing without her advice and boasts about her intelligence and loyalty to his friends. Among the princes, family and economic affairs are hardly distinguishable from affairs of state. Thus, intelligent women come to have a voice in matters of the first importance.

[574] A good hostess who provides food and drink for her husband's visitors need never fear his anger. Just as women speak a great deal of the importance of receiving clothing from their husbands, so men speak a great deal of the importance of a warm welcome for

Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

their friends, especially if they are away from home. A wife who always gives abundant beer and food to her husband's friends is, by so doing, showing respect for her husband.

Beauty does not count very heavily, but a man is not displeased if people notice that his wife is attractive and well-fleshed, has a long and narrow nose, a light skin, and is somewhat like a cow. If a woman is fortunate, she will have a child every two years, and the children will not die. One of the most fortunate women of whom the Rundi spoke—a Tutsikazi *imfura*, needless to say—gave birth to a child virtually every 11 months. The husband of a wife who produces many children is a real man, and people always speak highly of the fathers of many children.

A husband supervises his wife, as every superior supervises his inferiors, and he must punish her if she does not do as she ought. Hence, a Tutsi will not hesitate to go to see whether all the clothes he has given his wife are in the baskets that serve as wardrobes for women. He also goes to see if everything is clean. If he is not satisfied, he will warn his wife that she must change her ways. Sometimes she makes excuses. Perhaps she has not worked well because she has been ill, or because she had to do a great deal of work for her mother-in-law, because several of the workers have run off to Uganda, because her husband ordered more work than she had strength to do. A considerate husband will check up on his wife's explanations. If he is satisfied that they are correct, he will do his best to see that she has help, even if he has to help her himself. A man of bad character, however, does not accept any excuses. He will beat his wife, he will insult her, and she can expect to be sent back home, unless she becomes angry and goes back without waiting to be sent.

The Rundi speak a great deal about "good character" and "bad character". Character, for them, explains most of human behavior. Obviously, the ideal marriage unites a woman of good character with a man of good character. However, there are a great many people of bad character, probably most people. This explains, they say, the numerous quarrels and divorces. People know what they ought to do, but they don't do it. In all truth, a young woman lives like a nomad. She goes from her father's home to the home of her first husband, then after quarrels or divorce back again to her father, then to a second husband, then back to her father, until at last she finds a husband who pleases her and who at the same time is pleased with her. Divorce is forbidden those who are Catholics. Nevertheless, for them as for the other Rundi, married life is no more peaceful than any other interpersonal relationship among the

Ethel M. Albert

581 Rundi. Peace is always desirable but rarely achieved. The frequent
 ● 593 absence of the husband does not seem to diminish the tensions and problems of domestic life. There is a host of reasons to quarrel, to fight, to separate for several days or forever.

593 A man will be angry with his wife if she has drunk up all his beer, if she has not prepared dinner for him, if she has left the house without his permission, if she has invited company without permission, if she has not done the work he has told her to do, if he

[83] comes back home to find her in bed with another man. One

586 quarrel need not destroy a marriage. However, a man is considered perfectly within his rights to send away a woman who is consistently disobedient and lazy, who insults her husband and parents-in-law, who does not offer food and drink to her husband's visitors

543 while he is away from home. A woman suspected of witchcraft will be packed off at the first possible moment. A sterile woman will be retained only in the exceptional case: a man gives the bride-price to have children. Among the Tutsi, a woman who takes the milk

[754] to drink for herself instead of churning it into butter for her husband will be humiliated and sent away. Her father-in-law will invite her father to drink beer. Then, he asks the offending woman "to show the butter to the bull", who has been led into the yard for this little "ceremony". She has no butter to show. Her father, furious and humiliated, will take her back home and will punish her. Finally, a talkative woman who discusses her husband's business with strangers will certainly be sent back home. Towards a woman who speaks against her husband, who is engaged in intrigue against him, a husband will have no pity. She will be beaten within an inch of her life and sent back to her father—unless she has been clever enough to succeed in a plot that ruins her husband utterly, while she has arranged to be married afterward by his richer and more powerful enemy.

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On her side, a woman does not have to put up with a husband who eats so much of what she has cooked that nothing is left for her, nor with a husband who does not eat what she cooks. Does he think, she wants to know, that she is going to poison him, or is it that he prefers the cooking of his mother or sister-in-law? A man who praises other women need not imagine that his wife will stay with him for long, particularly if she is a Tutsikazi. If he has money and does not give his wife clothes, she will surely become angry. If all her children die, the woman will fear her mother-in-law's sorcery and will leave. If the husband consistently overworks her, if he beats her too much and without legitimate reason, she will go back home. Sometimes the marriage does not last the four days of

Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

the honeymoon. The morning after the wedding, it can happen that the young bride will go out into the yard and announce in a loud, clear voice: "I did not come here to go to bed with another girl". She goes home. The boy's father knows that his son is impotent. It is the mother's fault. She must have allowed the dried umbilical cord to fall on the male organ of her newborn son. The cure also is up to her. The parents give their son a great deal of beer so that he will become drunk. The father then leaves the house, and the mother then has intercourse with the son in order to remove the impotence which her neglect caused. If the cure has not failed—and there is great confidence in the probable success of this remedy—the young couple will be reunited and remain together to face the other risks of married life.

When spouses fight, the neighbour-women give advice to the wife and the men to the husband. Both are encouraged to reform. If the wife has become seriously angry, she will leave and stay at her father's for a while. She tells her mother her reasons for having left. If she is wrong, if she has deserved the beating, or if she has refused to do work which a woman is obliged to do, her mother must correct her. Sometimes after two or three days, she returns voluntarily to her husband. However, she much prefers to wait for her husband to come after her and to have to explain his behaviour to her father. If it is the husband who is in the wrong, his mistake will probably cost him a handsome new length of cloth, some money, or some jewellery before his wife will consent to go back to him.

Sometimes the advice of the neighbours and the parents lead at last to marital adjustment. If not, there is a divorce. However, the Rundi say that divorce is no longer reasonable after a man and woman have had two or three children together. Their blood has been mixed. Furthermore, they have had time enough to get to know each other's defects. In addition, to divorce the mother of several children is expensive. The husband takes back the bride-price, but he must pay to have his children. A Tutsi has to give a heifer for each daughter and a bull-calf for each son. The Hutu do not always buy back their children, or else they must wait a long time before they have sufficient hoes or money to redeem them. Occasionally, a man prefers simply to abandon a woman. She and her children remain on the property that the husband has given her, and she must send her sons to stay with their father as soon as they are old enough to work for him. Because he does not take back the brideprice, she cannot remarry. A father may not accept more than one dowry for each daughter. If she wants to remarry,

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Ethel M. Albert

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she must get her father or another relative to intervene for her with her husband. If she cannot do anything, she remains married but abandoned. Or, it may happen that an unfortunate Hutukazi without relatives can no longer endure a bad husband or is sent away by her husband or left a widow without property. Women of this kind become vagabonds who wander about the countryside, often with children, and who often enter voluntary slavery for the sake of food and a roof over their heads.

In the household, the mother-in-law is the superior of her daughters-in-law. According to the ideal, she is like their true mother. According to the proverb: the daughter-in-law waits for her mother-in-law's death so that she can at last be the mistress in her own house. A woman has good reason to fear her mother-in-law. She may persuade her son to send his wife away. She can poison a daughter-in-law she does not like, or she can overwhelm her with work. Among sisters-in-law, there is little friendship. The first one to be married into the household has in principle priority over the other sisters-in-law. If the husband of the first-ranking sister-in-law has just made four mortars for grinding grain, his wife will demand all of them for herself. Each of his brother's wives, no doubt, will also demand all four for themselves. The first one will probably have all of them, and the hatred of her sisters-in-law will surely result. Or, a Hutukazi may receive cloth and bracelets from her husband newly returned from Uganda. She loses no time in showing them to her sisters-in-law. The latter promptly ask their husbands for cloth and bracelets. If a woman has many children, her sisters-in-law not so many, or if one of them is preferred by the mother-in-law, the one thus favoured by fortune will be the object of the hatred of the others. This goes on, the men complain, this just goes on and on. Each woman nags her husband. The same

story and even worse is told of the wives of a polygamist. One of the wives of a Tutsi or Hutu will normally be kept as the permanent wife, with the privileges of seniority. The second and third wives are often no more than servants, farm labour and child-producing machines. They do not usually last very long. The bride-price is taken back to replace those who die without having produced children and those who run away. The *umutoni*, the favourite wife, is probably not the very first woman that the polygamist married. Although she may at a given moment be the favourite wife, she must exert herself to prevent another from taking her favoured place, as she probably took it away from someone else. A second or third wife who is stronger, more fertile, or cleverer may upset the order of precedence.

Ethel M. Albert

586 the child she is still nursing but leaves the older children with their
 855 father. Once weaned, the child is sent to live with its father. The paternal grandmother or one of the father's wives will bring it up. If the divorced woman remarries and is again pregnant, she sends [587] the weaned infant to his father with no visible regrets. If she is not pregnant, or if she has occasion to speak of her children by her divorced husband, she will express misgivings, for children are rarely kindly treated by a stepmother. She is also unhappy because she no longer has her daughters to help with the work. Moreover, it is nice to have children in the house so that one will not be lonesome. It happens very often that a woman who has many children will send a two or three-year-old to stay with its grandmother or an aunt who is sterile. Little children are really very much liked.

858 An *umuzungu*, an outsider, may be somewhat confused by the
 862 typical Rundi combination of pragmatic considerations with very
 593 tender sentiments. It seems a little paradoxical that Rundi love the infants they are nursing but pay no attention to children who have been weaned, except to wait for the day when they are old enough to work. In effect, weaning ends the only period of privilege and pleasure before full maturity. The life of young people is a long night of servitude under the exacting supervision of father and mother. In daily life, children have no importance as persons. The

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 • 593 inferiors of their parents, they are treated as inferiors. Excepting in [556] very wealthy families, they do not have enough clothing or blankets against the chill of their mountainous country. Children may go to bed without dinner, if the father and mother have eaten all the food or have simply forgotten about them in the midst of a quarrel or a party. Clever young people, nevertheless, learn how to profit 593 from the conflict of jurisdiction between the father and the mother. Both have the right to order the children to work. If a son disobeys [861] his father, he will be punished by a beating or by being deprived of his dinner. An indulgent mother may very well give food secretly to her unfortunate child. If a boy disobeys his mother but he has worked well for his father—for example, he has taken good care of the cows, but he has refused to go for firewood for his mother—the father will not allow the mother to harm the boy. She will have to wait for revenge on the boy until her husband is away from home. The son, if he is intelligent, will find a way to make her forget her anger. Or, he may take refuge with his paternal aunt or grandparents, who are obliged to offer him asylum against her anger. A young girl cannot go for protection to her father, and she can [603] avoid her mother's punishments only by putting herself under the

Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

protection of her grandparents. It is best if she is obedient and thus
avoid blows and dinnerless nights. 593 [603]

Friendship between a woman and her daughter must wait until the latter is herself a mother. If a married daughter is kind, she will ask her husband for permission to go to help her mother during the busy season. From her married son, a woman expects presents. [431]
If he is too poor to give gifts, she will mock and shame him. If he arrives at her home empty-handed, if he comes back from a job in Uganda or the city without something for her, she will be enraged. It means her son does not like her, for he has not given her a present. However, an intelligent woman very early chooses one of her sons as her favourite—usually a different one from the father's favourite. She struggles on his behalf against the other children of her husband, above all against his half-brothers, the sons of his father's other wives. She protects his heritage, she does not remarry even if left a widow very early, she prevents the brothers of her deceased husband from taking possession of her husband's cows or from chasing her and the children off of her husband's property. A widow, particularly among the Tutsi, prefers to remain on the property given her by her husband without remarrying. She is thus finally independent of a husband's authority. To live where her favourite son lives assures her happiness. A good son, it is said, puts the happiness of his mother before that of his wife. 589 [587] [768] [564] [593]

A full analysis of Rundi "Momism" is not possible here. It seems to depend in part on the biological and symbolic importance of food, which the mother gives or refuses at will; in part on the maternal sorcery of sacrificing her own interests for the sake of her sons; in part on the psychological power of which a mother assures herself during her son's infancy by making him very happy when she praises him and causing him great unhappiness and shame when she ridicules him. Children are, in any event, obliged to respect and love their parents, that is to say, to work for them and to obey them. 593

When a woman is at last a mother-in-law and grandmother, she has reached the high point of her life as a woman. A mother-in-law and her son-in-law, no matter what their caste, address each other as *umufasoni*, noble. Their relationship is one of highly formal respect, politeness of the highest degree, no jokes and no quarrels. A mother-in-law is the uncontested superior of her daughters-in-law. She orders them to work, she must be given respect, she chooses one of them as her favourite—the one who works the most for her, who is most obedient and docile. Towards her grand- 606 554 [607] 000

Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

mwamikazi and a wealthy *Tutsikazi* are matriarchs on a much grander scale than is possible for any *Hutukazi*. Nevertheless, the character model and the methods for success as a matriarch are quite the same. Furthermore, although the methods employed by women are not in every detail like those of men, there is only one character model for the matriarch and the patriarch, that of the superior. By the same token, there is only one character model for those in the roles of inferiors. The latter are always alert to opportunities for asking some good thing of a superior. If one road is closed, it is necessary to find another. If a husband is not generous, a woman will ask one of her brothers for gifts, or she will wait until her sons are grown. When fortunate people have received gifts, they obviously have something to give, and they thus may expect petitioners to come to them for gifts. Yet again, if a man is muddled by drink, his wife or his vassal or someone who wants his favour will make a request of a gift in the presence of others; a promise given, drunk or sober, before witnesses must be respected at the risk of losing one's fair name. The rules of society provide only for a minimum of happiness. One must rely upon intelligence to point the way to supplementary means and to profit from every favourable circumstance.

Like any normal citizen of Burundi, a *Rundikazi* desires as much power and authority as possible, which is to say, numerous inferiors, including children, workers, feudal followers; wealth, which is to say, for women who can inherit nothing, many gifts from men and from wealthier women; respect and love, which amounts to having many inferiors; elegance, which is again to say many gifts, but also education in the home of a princess; many children, which depends on the will of *Imana*; protection against one's enemies, that is, against one's rivals and one's mother-in-law; and the good luck to retain what has been received from *Imana* and from human beings, which again depends on *Imana* and also on one's own intelligence, courage and strength of character. There is decidedly no psychological conflict in women of strong character, nor is there any conflict between feminine ambitions and social norms. Everything is taken care of by the functional norms of the society.

A woman starts very young to calculate what she needs in order to be happy. From her father she expects little more than that he will find her a husband who is wealthy and reasonable, or better yet, tractable; that he will allow her to return home if she is not satisfied with a husband and will find her a better one; that he will from time to time give her gifts. If a father has a tendency to turn

Ethel M. Albert

- 554 a deaf ear to his daughter's wishes in the matter of changing a
 562 husband, she will perhaps make the necessary arrangements on
 593 her own initiative with the husband she prefers, and the father will
 have no choice but to accept the new arrangements. From her
 husband, a woman expects to receive gifts in proportion to his
 wealth—clothing, copper bracelets, beads, cows, money. She also
 wishes workmen and servants, so that she will not have to perform
 the menial tasks of inferiors; so that she will have a great many
 inferiors to supervise; so that she will enjoy sufficient energy and
 leisure for the planning and plotting necessary to increase her
 wealth and her influence in family affairs, economic matters and
 politics. As her husband's business partner, an intelligent woman
 will be consulted at every turn or she may not even wait for her
 husband to ask her advice. She decides what must be done, and her
 decisions must be respected. A wife who is well-established will
 almost certainly be the preferred intermediary of those who seek
 the favour of her husband. As an intermediary, she receives gifts,
 particularly pots of beer, to persuade her to intervene with the
 superior. An intelligent woman who finds herself with more beer
 than she needs will send a servant to sell it and keep the money
 [556] for herself. For women in the lower castes, there are various
 optional roles through which they can earn money. They may sell
 the excess baskets they weave; they may be midwives; they may be
 562 *bapsumu*, physician-pharmacists who sell medicines and amulets;
 556 they may be governesses or ladies-in-waiting for good families. A
 554 husband takes great pride in a wife who becomes wealthy. Her
 593 wealth advertises her cleverness and is at all events obtained at
 no cost to him. Some women, it is said, are so intelligent that a
 prince will make them *abashingantahe*, judges and councillors.
 Women who have this honoured position receive cows, clothing,
 jewellery and serfs. On occasion, a woman of this kind may be
 wealthier than her husband, but he has every reason to be pleased
 to have such a wife. A wealthy woman will keep some of her cows
 for herself for milk and butter. Others she will give to those who
 come and ask of her, and these will become her feudal followers
 who will work for her, respect her, and go about in quest of
 information for her.
- 554 The frequent absences of the husband are opportunities for a
 562 woman to show herself capable of managing the property. Work
 593 is for inferiors and is not a source of honour. It nevertheless
 establishes the realistic dependence of the superior upon his
 [46] inferior, and it forms the solid basis, sometimes explicitly recog-
 nized, of the relationship between superior and inferior. A good

Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

manager is indispensable to a wealthy man, for he has many 554
 feudal vassals, serfs, cows and lands. A woman of a powerful and 562
 wealthy patrilineage can be of great assistance to her husband in 593
 the matter of forming useful political alliances. The wife will [42]
 probably have considerable influence with her brothers and
 perhaps also with her father.

The higher the social status of a woman, the higher will be the
 social status of her husband, and hence the higher the status of the
 visitors she entertains. In her role as hostess, a clever woman can [574]
 profit very materially from the visits of her husband's friends and
 superiors. If she knows she pleases them, she will do them the
 honour of asking them for cows and other gifts. If her favourite
 son is ready to take his place in the world, she will look around
 among the visitors for a likely prospect of whom her son can ask
 a cow, if it is a family where the traditional values still prevail, or of
 whom he can ask for a job, if the son has been trained in European
 schools. In addition, the fair name of a man among his friends
 depends in no small measure upon the magnificence of the hospital- [574]
 ity provided in his home by his wife and upon the gossip that
 circulates between the visitors and the wife. If a woman is satisfied
 with her husband, she will see to it that visitors have a good
 impression of the man. She will find ways to get information to
 gauge the friendliness of the visitors towards her husband. She will
 recognize his enemies and know how to defeat them. If she hears
 from the visitors that there are rumours to the effect that her
 husband is no longer loyal to his superior, that he does not take
 care of the cows which his superior has given him, that he will soon
 be removed from his position and his wealth taken away from him,
 she will probably seek means to save him, since his downfall will
 also be hers. However, if the husband is not clever, if he has not been
 generous, and if the wife sees a way to move to a more favourable
 position in another marriage, she will risk adding her calumny to
 the rest. It does not happen often, but when a woman has succeeded
 in ruining her husband, men talk about it for a long, long time. A [589]
 mature woman prefers to stay with her husband and then, as a [591]
 widow, with her favourite son. Among the men with whom she
 is in contact—her father, her brothers, her husband, her brothers-
 in-law, her cousins, her sons, and her visitors—an intelligent woman
 will certainly find a few who are generous and obliging and through
 whom she can obtain the wealth and power that she desires.

In all this, it is not to be forgotten that a woman is the inferior of
 her husband and of his distinguished visitors. To get what is
 wanted, an inferior must know how to please superiors, unfailingly

Ethel M. Albert

554 displaying in public the respect and obedience due them. An
 562 intelligent woman makes herself liked or feared, according to the
 • 513 character of the men with whom she is dealing. Occasionally, it is
 [195] said of a Rundi that "his house is burning", that is to say, despite
 the show of respect, his wife rules the roost. He is afraid of her,
 she nags him, she criticizes him, she wants to decide everything,
 and one fine day she will put poison in his beer, or she will
 calumniate him. However, a woman need not dominate her
 husband in so heavy-handed a fashion to earn her laurels as matri-
 arch. She has her own inferiors to dominate, and there are other
 ways to become the *umutoni* of her husband and the other men.
 Apart from her ability as the mistress of her house and her
 generosity as a hostess, apart from all her obligations, a woman as
 an inferior is likely to understand very well the uses of flattery and
 subservience. She knows how to be an informant, to calumniate
 her superior's enemies as well as her own hated rivals, to show
 herself always loyal and devoted, to make the welfare of her
 superior her primary concern. She also knows how to satisfy
 sexual desires, the need for alcohol, and other demands of the body
 and the spirit. Superiors, apart from their economic dependence
 upon their inferiors, seem to seek them also for the satisfaction of
 what appear to be exceedingly urgent needs for love, respect, and
 loyalty and for entertainment that will take their minds off their
 troubles. It is to have these needs satisfied that they make presents,
 that they give what is asked of them. An intelligent woman busies
 herself with satisfying the desires of her superiors and thereby
 making herself indispensable to their happiness. Neither the
 Sophists, nor Machiavelli, nor the courtiers of Louis XIV have
 anything to teach the Rundi. An intelligent Rundikazi, like any
 [557] intelligent social inferior, knows that to obtain happiness it is
 necessary only to say yes—to play along with the internal weak-
 nesses and needs by which the superior is enslaved.

NOTES

- 193 ¹*Linguistic note:* Bantu prefixes have been dropped from words that refer to the inhabitants of Burundi. They are referred to as "Rundi" and by their caste-names, Tutsi, Hutu and Twa. Other words of the language retain their Bantu form, e.g., *mwami*, king; *mwamikazi*, queen-mother or princess, *bamikazi* in the plural; *muganwa*, prince, *baganwa* in the plural. The suffix, *-kazi*, designates the feminine. For "Rundi woman," "Tutsi woman," "Hutu woman," or "Twa woman," the Rundi forms will be used, i.e., "Rundikazi," "Tutsikazi," "Hutukazi," and "Twakazi."

Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

¹For the most part, what is here said of Burundi was true also of the people of the neighbouring kingdom of Ruanda. Significant differences will be footnoted. 184

For the hierarchical principle in Ruanda, see: J. J. Maquet, *Le Système des Relations sociales dans le Ruanda ancien*, Annales du Musée Royal du Congo Belge, Tervuren (Belgique), Sciences de l'Homme, Ethnologie, vol. I, 1954. 113

²Burundi is changing its laws. Thus, women and other social inferiors increasingly enjoy legal privileges and rights. 178

³In Ruanda, the queen-mother shared the royal power with her son, the *mwami*. This was not the case in Burundi. 184

⁴Very little will be said about religion in Burundi. The cult of Kiranga, the ancestor cult, and every other aspect of traditional religion and belief have been legally suppressed. About one-third of the population have been converted to Christianity. Religion, traditional and contemporary, is always important in the life of a society, but it may be concluded from the behaviour, the interests and the values of the Rundi that their society is secular rather than sacred. 795

⁵The word "caste" is not entirely satisfactory for describing the social distinctions of Burundi. However, there does not seem to be any better translation for the term, *aboko*, which connotes racial differences and to which are attached taboos and marriage regulations which separate rather rigidly these divisions of Rundi society. 181

⁶Although the terms "Hamitic" and "Bantu" are, properly speaking, linguistic terms, they will be used here, for lack of anything better, in their common acceptance as referring to social-cultural groups. 564

⁷In Ruanda, the Twa are more respected than the Hutu. Moreover, caste distinctions in Ruanda are social rather than racial. Cf. J. J. Maquet, *op. cit.* 121

⁸When the *mwami* of Ruanda gave a Tutsi wife to a man of an inferior caste, he raised the man to the higher caste. 184

⁹Cf. Jean Hiernaux, *Analyse de la Variation des Caractères physiques humains en une Région de l'Afrique centrale: Ruanda-Urundi et Kivu*. Annales du Musée Royal du Congo Belge, Tervuren (Belgique), Sciences de l'Homme, Anthropologie, vol. 3, 1956. 564

¹⁰Since 1952, polygamy is no longer permitted. Nevertheless, there are still a good many plural marriages. In the past, a prince might easily have had 20 wives. The average Rundi, however, would not have been wealthy enough to pay for more than two or three. 113

¹¹These taboos are not known in Ruanda. 595

¹²The Hutu husband is obliged to build and to make repairs on the house, to take care of the banana grove that encircles the homestead, and to brew banana beer. 564

¹³In the past, there was only one harvest each year. There are now two, but the second one is relatively light. 241

¹⁴Almost nothing is known about the Twa, except that the men go to the marshes for the clay needed by the women to make pots and then sell them. The work in the fields is done by the women, but it appears that the men are often home and help. 564

¹⁵It has been suggested that anaemia explains the physiological condition interpreted by the Rundi as a prolonged pregnancy. 323

¹⁶Blinded by the ideas of my own culture about men's interest in their children's paternity, I wasted a great deal of time in the field seeking confirmation from Hutu and Tutsi, the Europeanized and the traditional. I was finally convinced of the lack of interest in biological paternity. This is, in any case, in keeping with the rather liberal rules pertaining to sexual relations in the kinship system. 842